

It is very strange indeed, but it underscores the sad reality that the far left is in charge of the Democratic Party.

What we have witnessed these past 9 months is the biggest bait-and-switch in American political history. The American people didn't vote for Big Government socialism in 2020. Yet the Biden administration proudly proclaims that it is the most radically leftwing administration in American history.

According to POLITICO this morning, President Biden held a call with progressive House Members yesterday in which he told them that he was "getting more and more frustrated with moderate Democrats." For what? For refusing to be steamrolled by an agenda that most Americans don't want?

Democrats' extreme politics are eclipsed only by their incompetence, from Afghanistan to inflation, from our energy dependence to a border collapse. Why? Because far-left radicals are dictating the agenda, and they are calling all the shots.

With respect to this infrastructure hostage situation, the only question now is, Will every Democrat pay the ransom of Big Government socialism? And what is included in this ransom?

First, Democrats are currently haggling over the top-line cost. Will it be \$3.5 trillion, \$2.5 trillion, \$1.5 trillion, or something in between? Again, this is trillions of dollars—with a "t"—that we are talking about.

The number that they use is actually irrelevant because the bill will actually cost far more when you peel away the budget gimmicks. The overall cost of the bill is only labeled at \$3.5 trillion because Democrats are pretending—again, for budget projection purposes—that many of these costly programs are simply temporary and they will terminate in a few years.

Ask any Democrat whether this bill just includes some temporary spending—spending that will soon phase out. Ask them this: How will they vote when it comes time to prevent the program from expiring? You know this. Once you turn this sort of spending on, it will be next to impossible to turn it off.

This is like valuing the cost of your home at the initial downpayment price and ignoring the 30-year mortgage that follows.

Current estimates are that \$3.5 trillion really will be more like \$5.5 trillion, and that is just in the first decade alone. Yet all of Washington is currently obsessed with negotiations over where this phony number is going to land. This is another distraction. It is a tactic to divert your eyes from what is in the bill. No matter what number is used, the total cost of this bill is vastly higher than they claim, tens of trillions of dollars over my children's and your children's lifetime. That is before even accounting for inevitable cost overruns, waste, and program ex-

pansions. Of course, this means most of the Big Government socialism bill will be debt-financed because the bill will cost far more than projected even in the short run.

Given our current debt of nearly \$30 trillion, allowing the fuse to continue to burn on this new, inflation-fueling, economy-crushing level of debt borders on insanity. It is the kind of thing that toppled world powers in the past.

Now is the time to get our fiscal house in order or at least avoid making it worse. Democrats want to solve the problem of a burning house not by throwing water on it but by throwing on gasoline and arguing that 50 gallons of gasoline is, well, better than throwing 100 gallons of gasoline on it.

As obscene as Democrats' spending has become, focusing on cost obscures the more insidious, destructive nature of Big Government socialism.

Without careful oversight from the American people and their elected Representatives here in Congress, government bureaucracy can't help but serve its own interests. Over time, the bureaucracy has fed itself, becoming ever more powerful, ever more hungry, and ever more present in the lives of the American people.

Many Democrats believe in feeding the bureaucratic beast. They want the government to grow, and they want Americans to be ever more dependent upon government from cradle to grave. They want permanent government control over childcare, over preschool, raising your children, over healthcare, over energy, jobs, employers, and the list goes on. This will mean that Americans must turn to Big Government for more and more of life's necessities.

Big Government will increasingly control the lives of Americans beginning in their formative years. Once the Federal Government is in charge of funding preschool and daycare that has crowded out all the private competition, you better believe the Federal Government will be providing the lesson plans for your children as well.

This legislation will dramatically expand the welfare entitlement state, meaning they will provide even more incentives for American workers not to work. At a time when small businesses are desperately searching for workers, this is the wrong thing to do. It will fuel inflation; it will pile on more debt for our children and grandchildren; and it will drastically increase taxes and regulations on all Americans. More fundamentally and more sadly, it will move America closer to a European socialist model where government dependency replaces opportunity and where the dignity of work is lost.

The strength of America is our unique system—our spirit, our work ethic, and our compassion for one another. The foundation for all this has been the freedom to pursue our dreams thanks to the system of free market capitalism—a system that has spread the American dream across the globe. That dream spread because our country offered something different.

This plan to spend tens of trillions of dollars fundamentally threatens the American system and the American dream, not only by jeopardizing our fiscal stability but by ushering in Big Government socialism, which, if history is any guide, tends to crowd out everything else and, perhaps, especially opportunity.

The American people have proven that they will flourish if permitted to do so. In this sense, the only thing that can stop the American people is the size and the reach of the American Government. For the Senate to participate in imposing such self-inflicted wounds on our country would be profoundly sad. History will not look kindly upon it.

However, one point from my remarks this summer remains just as true today:

It only takes one Democrat to end this insanity, to stand up and say he or she won't participate in this scheme.

The American people and their children and grandchildren will no doubt be grateful if one of them chooses to do so.

I yield the floor.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:38 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Ms. SINEMA).

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

NOMINATION OF PALOMA ADAMS-ALLEN

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. President, I rise today to express my support for the nomination of Paloma Adams-Allen to be Deputy Administrator for Management and Resources for the United States Agency for International Development, USAID.

Ms. Adams-Allen is a dedicated public servant who has spent her entire career focusing on international development and eliminating global poverty. She will bring with her essential leadership experience, stemming from her years as USAID's Deputy Assistant Administrator for the Latin America and Caribbean Bureau and, most recently, as the CEO of the Inter-American Foundation.

She is exactly the type of leader USAID needs right now as Administrator Samantha Power aims to restore and refocus the Agency as a critical arm of U.S. foreign policy.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee reported Ms. Adam-Allen's nomination by voice vote, with no Members asking to be recorded in opposition. Yet she has been languishing on the Senate floor for more than 2 months due to Republican holds. Even though the Biden administration has been in office for more than 9 months, the Senate is only now getting around